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Letter dated 2 April 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to submit the report on the ninth annual workshop for newly elected members of the Security Council, which was held on 17 and 18 November 2011 at the Doral Arrowwood Conference Center in Rye Brook, New York. The present report has been compiled in accordance with the Chatham House rules under the sole responsibility of the Permanent Mission of Finland.

On the basis of the very positive feedback we have received from the participants each year, the Government of Finland remains committed to sponsoring the workshop as an annual event. The Government of Finland hopes that the report will contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of the work of the Council.

I should be grateful, accordingly, if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Jarmo **Viinanen**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 2 April 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

"Hitting the ground running": ninth annual workshop for newly elected members of the Security Council

17 and 18 November 2011
Arrowwood Conference Center
Rye Brook, New York

The Government of Finland, in cooperation with Professor Edward C. Luck and the Security Council Affairs Division of the United Nations Secretariat, convened the ninth annual workshop for newly elected members of the Security Council on 17 and 18 November 2011.

Each November, the workshops serve to familiarize the newly elected members with the practice, procedure and working methods of the Security Council so that they are in a position to "hit the ground running" when they join the Council the following January. The series also provides current members of the Council with an opportunity to reflect on their work in an informal setting.

The opening evening of the 2011 workshop featured remarks by the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations and President of the Security Council for the month of November 2011, Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral, and a keynote address by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Helen Clark.

The full-day programme on 18 November included three round-table sessions that focused on the following themes:

I. State of the Council 2011: taking stock and looking ahead

II. Working methods and subsidiary bodies

III. Lessons learned: reflections of the class of 2011

Opening remarks

The Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations, Ambassador Jarmo Viinanen welcomed the participants to the workshop. He noted that a year earlier, at the previous workshop, the referendum in the Sudan had been forecast to be the biggest crisis in 2011. Indeed, the situation there remained volatile. Few had foreseen the dramatic events of the Arab Spring that had occupied so much of the Security Council's attention in 2011. In its resolutions 1970 (2011) and 1973 (2011) on Libya, the Council had invoked the principle of the responsibility to protect for the first time under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. However, differences over how those resolutions had been implemented had affected the Council's subsequent response to events in the Syrian Arab Republic. Those two situations, along with the Council's endeavours to support the diplomatic efforts of the Gulf Cooperation Council in Yemen, had demonstrated the potential value of a serious discussion on the place of regional arrangements in the work of the Council.

According to the Ambassador, thematic issues currently occupied one third of the Security Council's agenda. It was therefore high time to address the linkages between the thematic and country-specific issues before the Council. He commended the monthly *tour d'horizon* briefings by the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat and the Council's growing interest in prevention. Not only was that a sensible approach in times of austerity, it also spoke to the importance of ensuring that the members of the Council had access to the best information and analysis available.

Noting how much he had benefited from the previous workshop, the Ambassador of Portugal thanked Ambassador Viinanen and the Government of Finland for hosting the annual event once again. He welcomed the incoming members and thanked those completing their two-year terms for their many contributions to the Security Council's vital work. He noted that the last time Portugal had served on the Council, it had not had the benefit of either the workshop or the practice of attending Council meetings and consultations as observers prior to starting its term. Both, in his view, had become part of the Council's best practices.

Anticipating the remarks of the Administrator of UNDP, he urged further reflection on the linkages between development and security. As had been underlined at the open debate during the Brazil presidency in February 2011, security and development were mutually reinforcing elements of sustainable peace.

According to the Ambassador, the workshop format stressed the kind of interactivity that was too rarely realized in the Security Council's consultations. He reminded participants that, in his opening remarks at the previous year's workshop, the Ambassador of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Mark Lyall Grant, had commented on the formulaic nature of much of the Council's work, the need to set clear priorities given how much time was devoted to routine matters, and the desirability of greater focus on conflict prevention. Had the Council succeeded in meeting those three challenges in the past year?

Following up on working method reforms widely agreed at the previous workshop, there had been an attempt to increase the informality of consultations. Lists of speakers had been largely abandoned and repetitive interventions discouraged. The degree of change, in his view, would depend both on personalities and on the members' willingness to depart from well-established patterns of behaviour. Because there were no records of consultations and they were supposed to be confidential, their conduct should not mirror that of formal meetings. Presidents should encourage members to avoid reading prepared statements and not to feel obligated to speak on every item. It had been possible, at times, to complete a briefing session in less than an hour and, more to the point, to use consultations for what they were intended, namely to have a truly interactive discussion as part of the preparation of decisions or positions.

What was needed, the Ambassador emphasized, was for delegates and the Secretariat alike to move out of their comfort zones. While the five permanent members of the Security Council provided its dynamic, one should not underestimate the importance of the sixth element: the permanent secretariat. They were always present, diligent and reliable, and their long memory could be an asset. However, the permanence of the secretariat could make it difficult to bring about change. That was why the input of the elected members, with their fresh perspectives, had been so essential to improving working methods. In that regard, the secretariat could play a

crucial part in supporting presidencies and sustaining new agreed practices. That should include the further implementation of the good practices identified in the "famous" note by the President of the Council (S/2010/507). It was necessary to improve the use of time and resources in order to increase the efficiency of the Council — a topic that could be pursued in the Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions.

The Ambassador also called for increased transparency within the Security Council. The "pen holders" he noted, had a particular responsibility in that regard. They should promote the early exchange of information and the involvement of all members.

At the 2010 workshop, the Ambassador of the United Kingdom had pointed out that, of the 27 items on the November 2010 calendar, 17 were routine, 5 were reactive, and 5 had been proposed by the United Kingdom as President. The pattern in 2011 had been no better, according to the Ambassador of Portugal. Again, there were 27 items, of which 17 were routine, 8 were reactive, and only 2 had been proposed by Portugal. Over time, he cautioned, that trend could lead to the Security Council being paralysed by routine. Both the pen holders and the secretariat could help by spreading the work more evenly over the course of the year and by varying the deadlines for reports and the length of mandates. The Working Group, he was pleased to note, was beginning to pay more attention to ways of enhancing the Council's programme of work.

Regarding the third theme from the previous workshop, namely the need to enhance the Security Council's role in conflict prevention, there had been some progress; however, more needed to be done. The monthly *tour d'horizon* by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, B. Lynn Pascoe, had become a useful and regular practice. It helped to focus attention on situations of emerging concern, but was insufficiently interactive and resulted in too much reading of statements. The key to effective prevention lay in the gathering of information and an early focus on signals of emerging challenges. In his view, to find the time for prevention and hence to bolster its efficacy, the Council would have to make further efforts to increase its efficiency. That was a goal to which the incoming members could make important contributions.

Keynote speaker

The Administrator of UNDP, noted how rare it was for the head of the Programme to have the opportunity to brief the Security Council despite the fact that there was a United Nations country team comprising United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in every place of concern to the Council. At such a challenging time for many traditional donors, the value of taking development concerns and capacities into account in the work of the Council had become increasingly evident. The importance of inclusive governance in bolstering the prospects for durable peace and security was more widely understood, as conflicts often resulted when Governments perpetuated development deficits by delivering services to only a portion of their people.

"Our shared agenda should go beyond responding to war", she declared. The work of the United Nations encompassed peace, human rights and development because the three pillars were mutually reinforcing. The largely unanticipated events of the Arab Spring over the past year had illustrated the point. In 2002, UNDP had

published the first of five volumes of the *Arab Human Development Report*, which underlined the problems of unemployment, poverty, education, youth bulge and the empowerment of women that had sparked so much popular unrest. Many lives might have been saved if more attention had been paid to those early warning signs.

The Administrator agreed with the speakers who had stressed the valuable role that the United Nations and the Security Council could play as front-line actors in the effort to prevent conflict. In that undertaking, the system could be a critical ally of the Council. It should be recalled, she continued, that the United Nations country team was already in place when the members of the Council were considering a mandate for a peace operation. Furthermore, the country team remained behind when the mission departed. To avoid redundancy and the surge and ebb of resources as a mission came and went, the members of the Council should pay closer attention to the capacities that already existed on site, which could be scaled up as needed.

Integrated mission-planning and coordination could be a challenging task, requiring dedicated efforts by many United Nations actors. To achieve coherence, each of those actors needed a clear understanding of its part in the larger enterprise and national ownership needed to be respected. Over the next year or two, a number of peace missions would draw down, posing a series of transition challenges. Some of those drawdowns, such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, would not follow the schedule envisioned by the Security Council. The potential for setbacks would be high in certain cases. It was therefore essential that the United Nations system be prepared to step up when those missions drew down.

The presence of the United Nations in countries where there was no peace mission could also contribute to international peace and security. For instance, in Kenya, local peace committees established prior to the post-election violence had helped to maintain calm in some parts of the country. Today, peace and development advisers assisted with development dialogues and trust-building in many countries. The United Nations inter-agency framework team for preventive action, composed of 22 entities, supported States in fulfilling their responsibility to maintain international peace and security.

The Security Council could act as an advocate for funding in post-conflict situations, as a legislator in shaping the course of transition periods, including the transfer of technical assets, and as a supporter of the Secretary-General's diplomatic and humanitarian efforts. In closing, she called for system-wide collaboration on preventing conflict. To be durable, conflict prevention should be based on inclusive and equitable development that ensured that everyone had a stake in his or her country's future.

In responding to a series of questions, the Administrator emphasized that the United Nations needed to be sensitive to sovereignty concerns as it shaped its conflict prevention strategies. She commented on growing South-South cooperation, including in technical assistance and trade. There was a danger that human development could slow to a trickle by the end of the century if the decline of the ecosystem was not reversed, she warned. Sub-Saharan Africa would be hardest hit. Noting that development agencies did not receive a cent from assessed contributions, she pointed out that fragility attracted funding while stable countries struggled to obtain donor support. Asked to cite a situation where the Security Council had undermined existing capacities, she pointed to election preparations as an area in which duplication was commonplace.

Session 1
State of the Security Council in 2011: taking stock and looking ahead

Moderator:

Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri
Permanent Representative of India

Commentators:

Envoy and Minister Alexander A. Pankin
First Deputy Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation

Ambassador Fernando Alzate
Deputy Permanent Representative of Colombia

Ambassador Rosemary A. DiCarlo
Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States of America

Overall assessment

Session 1 provided an opportunity for members of the Security Council to reflect on the current state of the Council's work and to look ahead to the challenges it would face in the coming year. Many participants called 2011 a particularly productive, intense and active year, despite deep divisions on some issues. Some speakers heralded the spirit of consensus that had survived those differences and permitted a remarkable degree of agreement on most questions before the Council. One discussant saw 2011 as an "historic" year and another as an "unprecedented" one. Among the relative successes mentioned were Côte d'Ivoire, South Sudan, supporting the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-led mediation between Cambodia and Thailand, renewing the mandate of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) for another decade, the introduction of "zero tolerance" into the Organization's counter-terrorism vocabulary, splitting the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities and improving due process on sanctions, and assisting the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The growing informality in the Council's working methods, quicker agreement on presidential statements and press statements, and the use of new, more flexible formats, including the appearance of a wider range of briefers, were praised.

At the same time, participants were candid about how deeply divided the Security Council had been on some matters, with one commenting that the vetoing of two draft resolutions in 2011 after a period of declining use of that power would affect perceptions of the Council and its ability to act. Another noted that the common perception outside the Council was that it was ending the year more divided than it had been at the beginning of the year. Moreover, some of the differences appeared to be philosophical and not just situation-specific. At times that might pose a choice between second-best solutions and inaction, which no one wanted. A member of the Council said that they should not hide their differences from the incoming members, since abstract political discussions were sometimes used to postpone action when many lives were at stake. The real choice was

between action and inaction. Others disagreed, contending that the Council had, at times, been too quick to impose sanctions or other coercive measures, when diplomatic and preventive tools needed more time to work. One discussant noted that it had sometimes proved difficult to sustain consensus within the Council. It was suggested, for instance, that the degree of unity in the Council on the Sudan had ebbed and that that was undermining the implementation effort.

A number of speakers underlined the need to understand why the Security Council had managed to find common ground and successful outcomes in some situations and not in others. As several interlocutors commented, the key to success lay in achieving unity of vision and purpose within the Council. According to two participants, pluralism in the Council did give its decisions greater legitimacy and credibility, even if it complicated the task of developing a consensus. The challenge was to find ways to work productively and not let differences on one matter affect the possibility of finding common ground on others. As one speaker put it, Council members needed to seek agreement when and where they could, as their interests would not always coincide. Another participant described the Council as the place where the principles of multilateralism met reality.

As in past "hitting the ground running" workshops, a number of Security Council members stressed that the workload was growing. One agreed with Professor Luck's background paper that serving on the Council was even more demanding and more satisfying than in earlier years. One speaker said that it was an exciting time to serve on the Council and another noted that it was a dynamic period in the Council's evolution, since the nature of security challenges was evolving and there were bound to be differences among Council members as they adjusted to the changing conditions and demands. According to several commentators, the public and Governments alike had growing expectations regarding the Council's performance, and looked to it to address a broader and more ambitious range of security challenges than in the past. Although the Council remained the most effective and dynamic body in the United Nations system, noted one discussant, those trends underlined the importance of using time better and selecting priorities more carefully. As one participant put it, the Council remained, as always, a work in progress.

Peace, justice and protection issues

There was broad agreement that the Security Council should pursue justice and protection objectives, though how that should be done spurred a lively exchange. One speaker suggested that public perception of the Council's work had improved largely because it had engaged more actively in justice and protection matters. Another discussant stated that two of the Council's four cardinal accomplishments in 2011 were sending a strong message against impunity and advancing the responsibility to protect. With respect to impunity, the speaker noted the referral to the International Criminal Court in the case of Libya, the dialogue with the Prosecutor of the Court, the discussion of the question of deferral in Kenya, and increasing concern about children and armed conflict and the protection of civilians. The Council had adopted unanimous resolutions invoking the responsibility to protect in South Sudan and Yemen, after controversies had arisen regarding the implementation of resolution 1973 (2011). That emerging principle, which should not be conflated with regime change, addressed important matters on which the Council should pronounce itself from time to time. A third discussant asserted that the invocation of the responsibility to protect had saved many lives and had

provided hope in Libya, while a fourth one suggested that the world was gaining faith in the Council because it was beginning to focus more on the lives of people. The Council had done relatively well in 2011 in regard to the responsibility to protect and the protection of civilians, matters that lay at the heart of what the Council stood for.

Asserting that all the Security Council members concurred on the value of trying to protect civilian populations, one participant emphasized that differences had arisen over how to implement protection mandates. The controversies related primarily to the authorization of force to protect populations and it remained unclear whether the actions in Libya had ultimately succeeded in saving lives. According to a second interlocutor, while the responsibility to protect and the protection of civilians were important mandates, some of their advocates seemed to equate them with the discredited notion of humanitarian intervention. A third speaker contended that the concepts of the responsibility to protect and the protection of civilians had been under siege in 2011 because they had come to be associated with regime change and other objectives that had not been agreed previously. In that participant's view, those were growing concerns.

Several speakers declared that the Security Council did not have to choose between justice and peace. In their view, without justice, peace often was not sustainable. According to one discussant, the Council should continue to strive to end impunity, whether through regional tribunals or the International Criminal Court. That was an important goal even though members of the Council might not be States parties to the Rome Statute.

Arab Spring

There was general agreement that the events of the Arab Spring had posed a crucial test for the Security Council, although views differed on how well the Council had performed in response, what lessons should be learned, and whether more effective preventive measures could have been taken. Several speakers referred to resolution 1973 (2011), the second on Libya, as a watershed whose results still affected how members of the Council perceived their choices and possible consequences in other situations. Although one interlocutor commented that it was still too early to assess the results in Libya, including how many lives had been lost or saved, most speakers had strong views on the matter.

From a critical perspective, one participant asserted that a draft resolution on the Syrian Arab Republic had been vetoed in October 2011 because of lingering concern over how the protection mandate in Libya had been implemented earlier in the year. Based on that experience, there were concerns about how some provisions of the draft resolution might be interpreted. Peaceful means of settling the conflict in Libya, including through the African Union, had been ignored. A second speaker commented that resolution 1973 (2011) contained too many elements, including a no-fly zone, "all necessary measures" to protect civilians, an arms embargo and a ceasefire. That "Christmas tree" approach made it difficult to evaluate the implementation of its provisions and tended to breed mistrust. Some countries appeared to interpret the arms embargo in a one-sided manner. In a similar vein, a third discussant described the agreement among the Security Council members on the resolution as "ambiguous", particularly because of the open-ended "all necessary measures" language. That had led to mistrust and misinterpretation of the mandate.

At times, those enforcing the civilian protection mandate appeared to be instigating violence. In addition, they had failed to keep accurate figures on casualties, making it uncertain whether more lives had been lost or saved.

A number of interlocutors, however, strongly defended the measures taken in Libya. One urged the members of the Security Council to be proud of their response to the crisis, as the situation could easily have turned into another Bosnia and Herzegovina, Darfur or Rwanda, with hundreds of thousands of civilian casualties. That could well have been the human price of divisions within the Council. A second speaker agreed that decisive and timely action by the Council had saved hundreds of thousands of lives in Libya, while a third had no doubt that many lives had been saved by the efforts to enforce the civilian protection provisions of the resolution. According to a fourth discussant, there was no possibility of negotiating with Colonel Gaddafi, who had promised "rivers of blood". It was an emergency situation, the Arab League had pressed hard for robust Council action and, in the speaker's view, it would have been wrong for the Council to hold "a debate in the clouds" when so many people were dying. A fifth participant asserted that more often than not, Council action was too little or too late to save lives, while a sixth declared that both the world and Libya were better off as a result of the Council's strong action.

In terms of the Security Council's responses to the Arab Spring, more broadly, questions about regime change and selectivity were raised by several speakers. One suggested that the political and security implications of the events of the Arab Spring deserved Security Council attention, but that turning that into a question of regime change was inappropriate. Another, pointing out that not all autocrats in the region had been asked to step down, asserted that the Council appeared to be selective in its treatment of the Arab Spring. At what point had certain countries decided that Gaddafi was no longer an acceptable trade partner and had to go? According to a third discussant, by not reacting more strongly to developments in Bahrain, the Council seemed inconsistent. It would be unfortunate if the Council appeared to be turning a blind eye to certain events because of the national interests of some of its members. It was not a matter of selectivity, contended another participant, but rather one of having to respond to emergency situations. The Council had been confronted by real emergencies in Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic, and had little choice but to react as best it could. Several speakers stressed that each situation was distinct and should be addressed on its own merits. Acknowledging that there were double standards on the Syrian Arab Republic, one pointed out that there were a range of interests regarding Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen and that "our values are not always in harmony with our interests".

Another speaker cautioned that developments in the Syrian Arab Republic presented a serious threat to international peace and security, as they had gone far beyond being an internal matter. Noting that the possibility of a stronger international response had never been given a chance, another participant asked whether an international intervention could possibly have made things any worse than they were today. According to a third interlocutor, the situation was deteriorating so dangerously that Council members should not let what had happened in Libya block action in the Syrian Arab Republic. Another discussant regretted that events in Libya had led the Security Council to generally react too weakly and slowly to the momentous developments of the Arab Spring. The Council should at least accompany such historic transformative processes, even if it could not fully shape them. Another speaker commented that the Arab League also had been slow to respond to events in

the Syrian Arab Republic and expressed the hope that the League would now be able to make more of a difference. The Syrian people, contended another participant, had paid a terrible price for the Government's refusal to accept mediation and the Council's hesitancy to act. The Council members who had used the veto had an obligation to come up with a feasible alternative course, and the other Council members were still waiting to hear one. Whatever the differences of view within the Council, commented another interlocutor, the seriousness of the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic compelled the members to keep looking for a solution to the violence in that country.

In retrospect, it was said that the Security Council had not done a good job of anticipating the Arab Spring and that it should have acted much earlier in both Yemen and the Syrian Arab Republic. It could have given greater and timelier support to the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative in Yemen. A second speaker agreed with that assertion as the initiative was "the only game in town". If the United Nations had offered an alternative track, it could have led to forum shopping. Although the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative was "the only game in town", commented a third discussant, there were persistent doubts about how effective it would be and the Council should be wary of ceding primacy to another body if that posed limits on its freedom to act as it deemed necessary. Commenting that the Gulf Cooperation Council did not appear to be all that active regarding Yemen, another participant suggested that the Council could be clearer about whether it supported the initiative.

In terms of early warning, one speaker declared that the Security Council members should not have been — and, in some cases, had not been — taken by surprise by the events of the Arab Spring. They were looking, however, to people and groups in the region to take the lead in addressing those developments. Another participant expressed doubts about whether it would have been possible to anticipate the course of the Arab Spring, pointing out that Tunisia, with its strong economic growth and low poverty rate, had been called the "Singapore of Africa".

Conflict prevention

A number of speakers expressed approval of the Security Council's growing appreciation of the value of conflict prevention. One spoke of the more pronounced culture of prevention and another of the more preventive mode in the Council's work. Several singled out the monthly horizon-scanning briefings by the Department of Political Affairs as a useful innovation, though some felt that attention should be paid to finding ways of making them even more relevant and helpful to the members of the Council. Three participants, echoing the keynote remarks of the UNDP Administrator, stated that the Council should make better use of the annual UNDP *Human Development Report* and other readily available public sources to gain a richer understanding of risk factors for possible future threats to international peace and security. According to two of those discussants, the Council should engage more fully with the rest of the United Nations in a common quest for fuller understanding of situations of concern and for more effective conflict prevention strategies.

As one participant put it, emergencies did not just crop up suddenly out of nowhere. there were signs and the Security Council should heed them more carefully. Another contended that the Council should act more proactively on the ground to prevent conflict. A third speaker commented that internal strife almost

always constituted a threat to international peace and security and underlined the need for further reflection on the nature of such threats.

According to one interlocutor, emphasis on prevention also placed a premium on closer partnerships with regional and subregional bodies; the mediation on the dispute between Cambodia and Thailand was an example of successful division of labour with ASEAN. Another underlined the need to give mediation and peaceful means of settlement sufficient time to show results and warned that external encouragement of violence could "turn a candle into a forest fire". In the view of another participant, it was easy to agree on the need for more effective prevention, but harder to take the bolder steps that sometimes required. For instance, it often might entail discussing situations that were not yet on the Security Council's agenda. While emphasizing the value of the Council's growing awareness of the need for preventive action, one interlocutor pointed out that it needed to improve conflict resolution in, for example, Cyprus and the Middle East.

Regional and subregional arrangements

Many participants addressed the Security Council's expanding relationships with regional and subregional organizations. Most predicted that such interactions would be even more important in the future. However, none felt that the Council was handling those critical relationships especially well. One commented that, in 2011, the intensity of such ties had not been matched by comparably good results. According to one speaker, the Council tended to marginalize regional arrangements when their views did not coincide. Divergent views within regional bodies could also impede cooperation with the Council; therefore, the search should continue for a better structural and operational foundation for dealing with regional arrangements. Another discussant agreed that the Council was inconsistent, sometimes working with regional groups and sometimes ignoring them, depending on what was convenient. Overall, the Council had done well in working with regional arrangements in 2011, but had been less successful with African regional arrangements, particularly in its failure to give the African Union initiative on Libya a chance. In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, however, the Council was caught between the differing views of the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), a comment that was seconded by another participant. The Council should look more to African institutions to manage conflicts in Africa because they knew the region the best.

Despite those challenges, several participants spoke of the importance of finding practical ways to support regional organizations and initiatives. One discussant commented that, although the Security Council had assisted regional groups in specific ways, it had yet to develop a strategic partnership with them. For instance, the United Nations could provide more logistical support to regional organizations and do more to assist the development of the African Standby Force. While concurring on the generic value of assisting regional groups, one speaker noted that the Council's support of regional initiatives on Yemen had not yielded much progress. Another commented that one way to help regional organizations was for the Council to be prepared to act when regional groups called for it, as in Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic. Council-regional cooperation was a matter both of how mandates were shaped and of how they were implemented on the ground.

One speaker counselled that such relationships should be seen in the larger historical context: the nature of international peace and security was changing and

so was the way the Security Council defined and went about its work. Other organizations, including regional ones, needed to redefine their roles and relationships accordingly. The Council had done a good job of listening to regional perspectives on Libya and Yemen. Concurring that Council members should take into account the views of those most directly affected by the Council's efforts at conflict management, another discussant noted the political importance both of getting regional arrangements on board and of gaining a consensus among the five permanent members. The two speakers had witnessed the repercussions when those key players were not on the same page.

Several speakers raised far-reaching questions about interactions between the Security Council and regional arrangements for further discussion at future workshops. When Council mandates were to be implemented by other organizations, one asked, how could the Council ensure that that was done in the intended manner? Similarly, how should situations be handled when the Council and a regional or subregional body had overlapping mandates? Where did legitimacy lie? The speaker urged further reflection at the 2012 workshop on how the Council could work more effectively with such groups on conflict prevention, an area in which they were often indispensable. A second participant asked whether the Council had to wait for regional groups before acting; at what stage it could take over; how long it had to wait before taking over; and whether there were limits to the kinds of action the Council could take without reference to the views of regional organizations? According to a third interlocutor, the Council's primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security could not be delegated to regional or other bodies, even if it wished to shift those burdens to the regional level. A fourth speaker stressed that the Council's responsibilities were treaty-based and that regional bodies could not substitute for its unique position in world affairs. Moreover, the latter had different capacities and might not be equipped to tackle certain challenges. Sometimes, as in the differences between the African Union and ECOWAS over Côte d'Ivoire, they pushed in different directions. Nevertheless, the attention given by the founders to regional organizations that largely did not exist in 1945 was remarkably far-sighted. In that speaker's view, improving the working relationship between the Council and regional arrangements would be the most conceptually difficult challenge confronting the Council in the coming years. It would be worth devoting a whole retreat to that theme in 2012.

Thematic debates

Views on the usefulness of thematic debates in the Security Council were mixed. One participant noted that discussions on important issues, such as women and peace and security, and climate change, were welcome, but that it was often unclear who should follow up with specific policy steps. A second speaker agreed that briefings on cross-cutting, thematic matters could be useful and that the problem lay with implementation, as it was often unclear what kind of action the Council should take on such issues as HIV/AIDS. The debate on development and security was quite useful but should not be considered a precedent.

One discussant cautioned that Security Council members should be careful not to encroach on the General Assembly's mandate. That was fair enough, responded another participant, who, while claiming not to be a fan of thematic debates in most cases, pointed out that they did tend to galvanize and energize other parts of the United Nations system. Commending the debate on women and peace and security,

a third speaker stressed the importance of increasing the Council's awareness of how thematic issues could have an impact on peace and security. A fourth participant added that it would be wrong to overlook demanding issues that had security implications, such as climate change. A fifth discussant noted that it might be difficult to agree on presidential statements on matters such as climate change, pandemics and food security, but that, in dynamic times, the Council should be ready to have healthy debates on new and emerging challenges. Reflecting on that discussion, another participant asked why everyone complained about the Council's widening agenda and growing workload, yet continued to add issues that encroached on the mandates of other organs.

Challenges for 2012

In terms of specific situations that would be challenging in 2012, one participant mentioned the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, particularly in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Another flagged Palestine, continuing developments in the Arab Spring, and the Sudan, where there had not been much progress. Palestine was mentioned by a second speaker, who commented that thousands of people had died there as well. Two discussants predicted that questions relating to the protection of civilians and to the responsibility to protect would continue to command priority attention in the Security Council in 2012, with one commenting that the lively debates should be seen in the larger context of the development of a culture of human rights.

Several speakers identified the rationalization of mandates and peacekeeping operations as continuing challenges for the Security Council. One speaker commented on the growing cost of peacekeeping and special political missions. Although the cost of inaction would undoubtedly be much greater, such missions consume a very large portion of overall spending by the United Nations system, with the Council essentially deciding on two thirds of the total. A second participant pointed to the growing number of peace and security mandates, which should be trimmed or modified based on input from those on the ground, assessments of their effectiveness, and judgments about changing circumstances. Agreeing on the need for a rationalization of mandates, another interlocutor commented that the Council should do a better job of matching mandates and available resources. According to a fourth discussant, the high level of spending on peacekeeping missions was not sustainable. Rationalization and priority-setting were needed, along with more delegation to regional arrangements and greater efforts at conflict prevention. Echoing a point made by the keynote speaker, another participant asserted that more care needed to be taken to ensure that newly mandated missions did not duplicate capacities other United Nations entities already had on the ground.

One participant commented that the biggest challenge for the Security Council lay not in rationalizing existing mandates, but in addressing situations where no mandate existed and neither the Secretariat nor the Council members saw the threats ahead. A fuller and earlier exchange of information between the Council and the secretariat and between the permanent and elected members of the Council would help. Another speaker responded that the Council tended to be too reactive and needed to sharpen its capacity to anticipate the challenges ahead. A third interlocutor suggested looking at where elections were scheduled, as trouble often followed.

According to several discussants, the biggest challenges in 2012 might be political. One suggested that reaching unanimity and consensus would sometimes be difficult, since that required reconciling principles and interests. Another asserted that the Security Council should exhaust all peaceful means before taking more forceful measures and be especially cautious about authorizing the use of force. A continuing challenge was the need for the Council to adjust to the changing nature of conflict, commented a third participant, since inter-State wars were becoming rare and intra-State or transnational conflicts were more common. Both principles and politics within the Council would be affected as it redefined and adjusted to its new roles. Taking an historical perspective, another speaker concluded that the short-term stress caused by such changes might turn out to be an investment in the Council's future.

Session II
Working methods and subsidiary bodies

Moderator:

Ambassador Peter Wittig
Permanent Representative of Germany

Commentators:

Ambassador Mark Lyall Grant
Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom

Ambassador **Wang** Min
Deputy Permanent Representative of China

Minister Doctor Mashabane
Deputy Permanent Representative of South Africa

Security Council consultations

Picking up a prominent theme of previous workshops, many speakers called for the Security Council's consultations to be more informal and more interactive. One admitted to not listening half the time, given that there tended to be little give-and-take discussion. Several participants recalled that the 2010 workshop had identified a number of practical steps to improve consultations and that there had been real progress since then. For instance, the practice of having a list of speakers had been abandoned for most Council consultations. That step had permitted greater interactivity. It was also suggested that the use of videoconferencing and the monthly horizon-scanning briefings had encouraged more lively exchanges. Members were beginning to demonstrate greater restraint in terms of not feeling obligated to speak on every issue.

Despite those encouraging steps, several interlocutors stressed that much more progress towards improving the conduct of consultations was needed. As one discussant put it, working methods were the Security Council's tools; thus it was essential to continue sharpening them. According to one participant, some Presidents had made a greater effort than others to make consultations more informal and interactive. Because there was always a temptation to repeat what others had said if one agreed and wished to show support, consultations had come to resemble open

debates. In the end, opportunities for strategic discussion were lost. Another participant suggested that presidencies be assessed on the basis of how much innovation of working methods had been accomplished that month. It was up to the President, agreed a fourth discussant, to ensure that consultations were less "ritualistic" and more interactive.

"We know how to make consultations more interactive, but we just do not do it", lamented one participant. Another commented that the problem ran deeper than keeping a list of speakers. Council members needed to change their mentality and philosophy. They should not have to worry that it would be reported if they decided not to speak on a particular issue in consultations. It often seemed that delegates had forgotten the purpose of consultations, since the dynamic changed when the speaker stopped reading his or her notes and actually looked at the other members of the Council. If interactivity was to work, cautioned another interlocutor, Ambassadors would have to make more of an effort to be present; there would not be much interactivity if an Ambassador looked around and saw that other delegations were represented by Second or Third Secretaries.

It was proposed that one way to improve consultations would be to hold them on an "Ambassadors-only" basis from time to time. Several other participants agreed. One recommended more interruptions for clarifications and questions. In consultations, there was no need to call on the parties to do this or that or to assure the other members of the Security Council of one's commitment to peace. Another discussant suggested that, as an experiment, the Council members agree to hold consultations without prepared notes for a six-week period. A third pointed out that, since debates tended to be little more than opportunities to enunciate set positions, it would make sense to circulate key questions beforehand. Another commented that doing away with some of the regalia and fancy language would be a good place to start. A fifth interlocutor suggested that a more informal and interactive exploration of thematic issues could be facilitated through more frequent half-day mini-retreats, which could be held in New York.

Efficiency and cost-effectiveness

As in the previous workshop, several participants spoke of the Security Council's heavy workload, with one caricaturing its "Christmas tree" agenda with its mix of many situation-specific and thematic items. That had led to the abandonment of the practice of not scheduling meetings on Fridays. More importantly, over time, the Council's credibility could be destroyed by the proliferation of agenda items. The breadth of the agenda, noted another speaker, placed a premium on the flow and quality of information available to the members, especially from the secretariat. High standards were needed, as well as long work hours.

The suggestions for saving time and money fell along two paths: adjusting the rhythm of the Security Council's work over the course of the year and identifying ways to reduce costs by rescheduling weekly demands for secretariat services. In terms of the first path, one participant called for a rationalization and reconciliation of Council mandates, which had become too numerous to keep track of. Another urged a careful review of reporting periods and periodicity, so that reporting and the renewal of mandates would not be so heavily concentrated or "bunched" at certain times of the year. Several other participants agreed. Regarding the second path, one discussant urged that greater attention be paid to how the weekly flow of work was

organized, so that there was less call for staff and support services, such as translation, conference services and publications, over the weekend. The speaker contended, and others concurred, that such seemingly modest steps could produce significant cost savings. It was suggested that follow-up conversations be undertaken with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat on how mandates might be spread more evenly throughout the year and whether review periods might be lengthened in some cases.

Subsidiary bodies

The discussion of subsidiary bodies followed two basic tracks: the selection of chairs and the status and use of experts. As in recent workshops, a number of participants complained strongly about the process of selecting chairs of subsidiary organs, which they characterized as arbitrary and lacking in transparency. Why, they asked, were non-permanent members not consulted about who would chair which body? In the words of one speaker, the selection process put relations between permanent and non-permanent members off to a bad start. Given the significant responsibilities and time commitments involved in chairing the sanctions committees, why were they always headed by non-permanent members? One speaker noted that progress had been made in listing and delisting procedures, as well as in rationalizing the burden-sharing among committees, but not among members of the Security Council.

The discussion on experts and expert panels produced a lively exchange. A number of participants emphasized the importance of protecting the professional independence of experts, while others stressed the need for oversight of their work and for equitable geographical representation. One interlocutor commented that it was unclear whether the subsidiary bodies were working well on the whole, but there was no doubt that preserving the independence of experts was essential to their proper functioning. According to another discussant, even the members of the Security Council who had strong sanctions teams in their delegations depended on the work of panels of experts. Their reports always contained valuable information and analysis that should be shared with all Member States; the distribution of such reports should not be blocked or sidetracked. Noting that expert groups usually had a better feel for events on the ground than officials and diplomats at Headquarters, one interlocutor urged that their reports always be sent to the Council as a whole and called for efforts to ensure that decisions on their reappointment were made on the basis of merit, not politics.

Another participant agreed that experts should be treated as if they were independent, but first they had to act in an independent and objective manner, which had not always been the case. They needed to maintain high professional standards, concurred a second interlocutor, by producing solid evidence, not just repeating allegations and rumours. It was also important to maintain broad regional representation. The work of groups of experts could be quite expensive, added a third speaker. While experts were independent, and reported to committees, their work was not transparent. The United Nations did not publish all of their reports, although some had been leaked by the experts themselves. One participant, not taking sides in the debate, pointed out that the conditions of working as an expert for the world body had not proved particularly attractive and that few Member States had responded to the questionnaire on the nomination of candidates for such positions.

Pen holders and relations between permanent and non-permanent members

Compared to some past workshops, there were relatively few comments about strains in the relations between permanent and non-permanent members. One interlocutor urged incoming members to feel free to approach permanent members, who had the most extensive institutional memories, when they had questions or were uncertain about how to proceed. Another one pointed out that there were other sources of institutional memory, including, prominently, the secretariat and Security Council Report. Although one speaker commended the provisional nature of the Council's rules of procedure, another contended that that convention was sometimes carried too far.

One speaker commented that the permanent members should not be the only pen holders; for instance, there could be two pen holders for some situations, one from the region and one permanent member. Presidents could become more involved in drafting and not leave everything to the pen holders. A second discussant added that non-permanent members might sometimes appear uncreative because they were not allowed to share in those duties. Often, the five permanent members worked out a text and then told the other 10 members that they could not ask for changes in the agreed text for fear of upsetting the agreement among the five. According to a third participant, bringing in another drafter with an interest in the subject should be seen as a way to co-opt them.

Missions and conflict prevention

One discussant suggested that, in order to undertake more conflict prevention, the Security Council should plan and conduct its missions in a more strategic manner. The President could travel to an area of concern to deliver a message on behalf of the Council as a whole or there could be "mini-missions" of three to five members. The monthly horizon-scanning briefings could help to spur thinking on where missions might be most useful. A second speaker agreed on the usefulness of the horizon-scanning briefings, while a third expressed continuing scepticism unless the briefings focused on matters that were not on the Council's agenda and the members were willing to listen rather than simply pronounce on the items. Several interlocutors agreed on the potential usefulness of smaller and more flexible missions. A troika, composed of the President, a pen holder from the permanent members, and a Council member from the region, might be a good combination in certain situations. Two other participants agreed that more missions to more trouble spots were needed to deliver messages, gather facts and interact with the parties, but they should be smaller owing to cost considerations. Missions might be a helpful component of prevention and an indication of the Council's growing appreciation of its value, commented another discussant, but the terms of reference of the mission to Afghanistan had not been agreed upon in advance, as should be standard practice.

Relations with other organs and Member States

As one participant put it, those outside the Security Council naturally wanted more transparency, while those engaged in its work came to appreciate the need for balance between confidentiality in some situations and transparency in others. For instance, it was hardly helpful for persons in the second row to tweet to the press or others about the course of the discussions before the members had even left the room. That example, responded a second discussant, illustrated why the Council

should adapt its methods to take account of new technical means of communication. The Council needed to reconcile itself to the likelihood that the press would find out about consultations almost immediately, a third interlocutor commented. Leaks in the United Nations, said another participant, were inevitable and the Council needed to learn to deal with them. Were there cases, asked a fifth speaker, where breaches in the confidentiality of information had actually harmed decision-making in the Council?

Considerable attention was devoted to ways of enhancing the Security Council's interactions with non-members and other groups. Two participants stated that the Council as a whole should try to meet with delegations from regional and subregional arrangements, such as the African Union. Another pointed out that most Member States did not prepare the required reports on the implementation of Council resolutions; thus, more follow through was needed. Consulting more fully with the larger United Nations membership could help to avoid difficulties with implementation down the line and to match ambitions and capacities more realistically.

One discussant commented that the Security Council was improving its outreach to non-members by increasing the number of public meetings and having the President brief non-members monthly. Another addressed a number of ways to improve the presentation of the Council's annual report to the General Assembly, based on the reactions to the 2010-2011 report. Since many delegations complained that they did not have time to study the report before it was debated, it was suggested that a new schedule be considered, such as submitting it in early October and holding the debate in late November. The introduction to the most recent report was generally well-received, especially its detailed discussion of the reform of working methods, but other sections were criticized by some as being insufficiently analytical and detailed. Questions were raised about how fully the measures described in the note by the President of the Security Council (S/2010/507) had been implemented. Although the Member States maintained that they valued the monthly briefings by the President, their turnout for the sessions had generally been disappointing. The speaker urged each President to make a monthly assessment. That would both provide a valuable historical record and enhance understanding of the Council's work. In addition, the President for the month of September could select one or two themes from the previous report to highlight in the presentation of the new report to the Assembly.

Session III
Lessons learned: reflections of the class of 2011

Moderator:

Ambassador Gérard Araud
Permanent Representative of France

Commentators:

Ambassador Ivan Barbalić
Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Ambassador Nelson Messone
Permanent Representative of Gabon

Ambassador Nawaf Salam
Permanent Representative of Lebanon

Ambassador Raff Bukun-Olu Wole Onemola
Deputy Permanent Representative of Nigeria

Leonardo Luis Gorgulho Nogueira Fernandes
Minister Plenipotentiary and Political Counsellor of Brazil

Keys to a successful term

The incoming members were advised to have a clear sense of what they wanted to accomplish in the Security Council from the outset and to stick with the pursuit of that objective. It helped to have a well-defined focus from the beginning to the end of one's tenure. One participant noted that new members were soon identified with specific issues, and were expected to carry some weight in those areas. Their presidency might be assessed from that perspective. One outgoing member stressed that every member of the Council mattered, while another commented that each member, regardless of the size of his or her country, brought something unique and valuable to the work of the Council. That was especially apparent in terms of regional expertise, but was often true in respect of specific thematic issues as well. Several discussants mentioned areas in which they felt that they had made a difference.

Non-permanent members contributed not only by carving out a substantive niche or two in the Security Council's broad agenda; there were also certain political roles that could best be played by them. According to one interlocutor, the Council was often in need of consensus-builders, a function that could sometimes be performed by elected members, especially if there were fissures among the five permanent members. With effort, the "red lines" that were drawn early in negotiations could be eased substantially. In the view of another speaker, the Council was most effective, at the diplomatic level, when it engaged all parties and avoided demonizing one of them. Non-permanent members who did not have strong national interests in the situation might be able to take a more balanced approach than some of the permanent members and thus be able to address the grievances of all sides.

"Diplomacy is a two-level game", emphasized one participant, who found it challenging to conduct negotiations in the capital and in the Security Council chamber at the same time. To succeed, one needed to be adept at both domestic and international diplomacy. Another participant agreed that it required substantial additional effort to conduct an ongoing dialogue with national authorities, but that might well prove to be the key to a successful tenure. It also helped to occasionally have access to the very highest national leaders.

Two speakers emphasized the value of learning the Security Council's procedures and how to use them to advance one's agenda. It was essential to know the rules of the game, even if the rules of procedure were modest and flexible. Working methods were the key to the Council's productivity. Some participants commented that their delegation benefited from having one or two key individuals who had served on the Council before, while others said they looked elsewhere for experienced advice and found it fairly readily.

Lessons learned

The fast pace and heavy workload of the Security Council required an accelerated learning process, advised one outgoing member. There was no choice but to take a "learning by doing" approach. Fortunately, however, there were many easily accessible sources for such assistance, including other countries and the secretariat. The gaps in the expertise of one speaker's delegation had been filled readily through the cooperation of other members of the Council. While concurring about how helpful other delegations had been, another discussant underlined the challenges facing small countries on the Council. To begin with, campaigns to join the Council were becoming more expensive and more competitive. They might soon be beyond the reach of small countries, which would become increasingly scarce in the Council. Once they did become members, they had to take positions on issues in which their capitals had little or no experience; thus, their membership could challenge their whole political systems, not only their foreign services. It was a major challenge. Another interlocutor had had a similar experience. However, both considered that it had been worth the effort required.

Membership in the Security Council had enabled one delegation to learn about how peace and security issues were handled by the United Nations system. It had entered the Council with a strong interest in peacekeeping and peacebuilding and was leaving with a keener appreciation of the finer points of preventive diplomacy and mediation as well. It also had witnessed how much procedural issues mattered in the conduct of a presidency, for the Council's substantive work, and even for the Council's relationship with the African Union. In addition, it had gained a sense of how critical bilateral consultations could be to the achievement of consensus in the Council. At times, consultations had led to a consensus in cases where that had seemed impossible because of differing national interests.

One participant noted that the ability of the Security Council to respond effectively to fast-moving crises depended on the degree of political cohesion within its ranks. The primary responsibility for ensuring cohesion must remain with the five permanent members, but non-permanent members could contribute, including through their presidencies. Another discussant responded that the Council was divided on some important issues; it was important to be candid about that. However, all ideas for moving forward were welcome, especially when fresh approaches were needed, as they were today in respect of certain matters. Council members should not forget that they represented a living community of nations.

Internal and external relationships

The discussion focused on three kinds of relationships: (a) between the permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council; (b) between members of the Council and the larger membership of the United Nations; and (c) between the Council and regional and subregional arrangements. Within the Council, there remained some tension between the permanent and non-permanent members, but there had been some efforts to bridge those differences. However, more work needed to be done. It was suggested that there could be closer collaboration between pen holders and interested non-permanent members, but that the latter needed to take the initiative. One outgoing member was "very happy" with the spirit of cooperation among the Council members. The high degree of information-sharing could be a great asset for incoming members. However, one

speaker noted that, at times, the five permanent members seemed "to have their own game", while another stated that the nature of conflict had changed dramatically over the past 65 years whereas the composition of the Council had not.

Two interlocutors emphasized the importance of reaching out to the larger United Nations membership. One called for a continuous outreach effort to give non-members a chance to be heard. Members should brief their regional groups regularly and the President should brief the larger membership. That effort had to be led by the non-permanent members if it was to have any momentum. According to the other interlocutor, one way to effectively expand the dialogue with non-members was through the new informal interactive dialogues, which had been conceived as an interface between the Security Council and non-members and an instrument for enhancing transparency. Another outgoing member commented that there were bound to be some tensions between the dual roles of being accountable to the whole membership and trying to represent the perspectives of one's regional group. One needed to try to strike a balance.

As in earlier sessions, concern was expressed about the state of the Security Council's relationship with regional and subregional arrangements, especially in Africa. One discussant pointed out that such interactions had become strained by differences over the way the mandate in Libya had been carried. Another called for increased attention to regional groups, particularly the African Union and ECOWAS. There was a need, in that regard, to share perspectives on how global/regional/subregional cooperation was faring in terms of AMISOM and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). A third speaker urged incoming members to reach out to the regional organizations to which they belonged to help redefine their working relationships with the Council.

Assessment of the performance of the Council in 2010-2011

As one participant underlined, whatever the political differences within its ranks, it was an exciting time to be a member of the Security Council. In 2010-2011, the Council had addressed a number of new thematic issues and had taken more vigorous action in several situations where international peace and security had been threatened. A second interlocutor agreed that 2011 had been a very good year for the Council, one that would serve as a benchmark for the future. A third compared his delegation's experience in 2010 and 2011. The first year had been marked by agreement on some long-standing issues and had been relatively tranquil but unexciting. On the other hand, 2011 had been a very successful year in which the Council had taken up many new and consequential matters. Some differences were to be expected, but the Council still had managed to address a number of tough issues productively. For the first time, it had operationalized the responsibility to protect on a large scale. The short-term tensions that had produced would turn out to be a huge investment in the Council's future.

Several discussants pointed to the Security Council's growing interest in preventive action, including the high-level thematic debate on preventive diplomacy in September 2011, as an encouraging sign of the future direction of its work. One, however, regretted the Council's tendency to bow to public pressures, giving up on peaceful measures and resorting to coercive ones before the former had been exhausted. Diplomacy should be given time to work. According to a second interlocutor, Africa needed both conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In shaping

peacekeeping mandates, the Council should pay more attention to the realities on the ground and make adjustments to take them into account. Otherwise, the credibility of both peacekeeping and the United Nations could suffer. A third speaker saw the thematic debates on the implications for security of economic factors, climate change and dialogue among civilizations and cultures as indications of a broader understanding of the many elements of prevention. However, the Council had traditionally been more focused on conflict management than on conflict resolution, particularly in the Middle East. All in all, that speaker claimed to be more hopeful than in 2010 that something would change to make the United Nations more effective and efficient in meeting the growing array of peace and security challenges.